

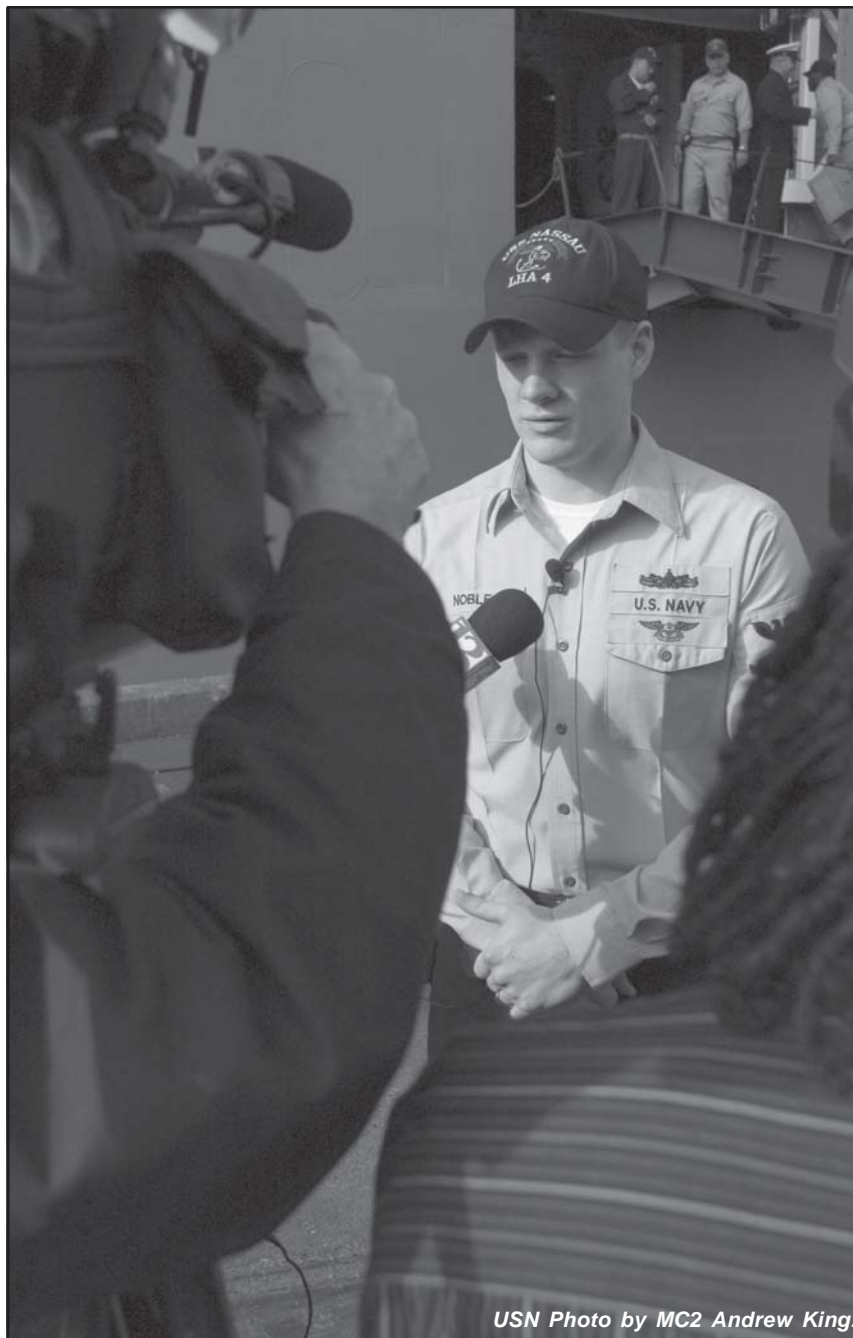
Gator Times

USS NASSAU (LHA 4)

March 2007

Vol. 8, No.3

Back on the High Seas



USN Photo by MC2 Andrew King.

Operation's Department, OS2 (SW/AW) Justin Noble is interviewed by local television stations about USS NASSAU's six week surge in support of "Exercise Phoenix Express 2007" on March 28.

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What do all these new deployment terms mean?

By Fleet Master Chief Rick West

Hoo-yah Warriors! I hope everyone is enjoying a safe and prosperous 2007.

I have been out and about the Fleet since the beginning of the new year meeting many of you and as I have said many times over, you continue to amaze me with your enthusiasm, dedication and willingness to complete any and every mission.

Shipmates, I want to take this time to talk to you about the Navy's new focus on the deployability and employability of our assets as well as other terms used like "dwell," "Fleet Response Plan (FRP)," and "Homeport Tempo." You may have already begun to hear these terms used, and it is important you understand these terms and understand

what is behind the changes in how we deploy the Navy – and you.

In order to help you understand these new terms and the new operational focus, I want to take a look back a couple of months.

In the last few months, the Navy has been reviewing the deployability and employability of its forces to find out how we could increase operational availability while still preserving overall readiness and quality of service for you and your families. As a result, we revisited deployment policies, revised some definitions — as you saw above — and signed a new instruction. These changes complement the FRP by limiting deployment lengths and by providing you and your family more stability in your planning.

Before we dig deeper into further details of the new instruction, let's stop and look at what some of these terms mean. First, deployability and employability describe a window of operational availability open to task units outside scheduled maintenance and training periods required to maintain unit readiness.

Employment, also known as the FRP cycle, is the time from the end of one maintenance phase to the end of the next maintenance phase. A deployment is time spent providing presence to Combatant Commanders (COCOMs) regardless of deployment length. As a result of our new deployment policies, any forward-deployed time now counts! Our nation is at war, and you and your families have proven that you understand this means the nation depends on the capability of naval forces to provide forward operational presence. You remain committed to carrying out the Navy's — and the nation's — mission.

In relation to deployability and employability, Homeport Tempo is the percentage of time a unit is in homeport or on station from the end of a maintenance phase to the end of the next maintenance phase. Keep in mind that all deployable elements have a maintenance period, but these maintenance periods



Pacific Fleet Master Chief

vary in length and loss of operational capability. For example, ships experience a total loss in availability when they are required to be pier side or in drydock. Other units, like air wings or detachments assigned to the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command, do not lose full capability. These units can still be employed to their level of current capability.

Lastly, dwell is the ratio of the number of days a unit spends on its last deployment to the number of days the unit spends in homeport, on station, or in local waters between deployments. This term replaces the Navy's term, "turn-around ratio." This change, as well as other terminology changes, aligns our verbiage and our deployment policy with our Marine Corps, Army and Air Force counterparts to the extent possible.

What does all this mean to you? If your ship deploys on a routine deployment, goes for six months and comes home, you should, per the "dwell" time, remain in your home operating area for

Please See "Deployment" Page 12.

Gator Times **USS NASSAU (LHA 4)**

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A Time for Renewal

By Chaplain Karl Lindblad

Ah Spring! Here it is, longer day light, warmer weather, the sound of nature surrounds us. Many traditions surround the passage of this time – we hear of spring cleaning, moving the clocks forward, thoughts of romance, planting flowers and renewal of religious commitments.

In the Judeo-Christian traditions, we look back and we look forward. The faithful ‘remember’ their heritage not merely as some past historical moment, but an active participation in the event itself. The call to being Jewish is to participate in the Passover, not merely recall it.

The young member of the family asks, “Why is this night special?” It is

in the telling of the story of the Passover event, the physical and spiritual freeing of the people that the young member is incorporated into the faith group.

When the Christian recall the life, death and rising of Jesus, which is celebrated in the last supper, then they too are incorporated into the body of the Church. It is a call to renewal, a call to restoration, a call to life.

So how goes your spring renewal or spring cleaning? Got a few cobwebs that even 16 foot seas can’t break? What’s holding us back from a good renewal? A letting go of those earthly webs that keep us from truly becoming who we were meant to be?

We hear the call to get up, to rise, to be freed from the yoke of slavery to

Chaplain's Corner



selfishness and pride. We are called to clean house, to give away the leaven that weakens our strength. Do we really need that fancy cell phone, the expensive watch, the tension that occupies us when our stuff is left behind as we sail through deep oceans. Too many times we hoard our earthly goods when the call is to give them up or to at least share the goodness that God has allowed us to have.

So take advantage of all the opportunities we find with the coming of spring. May we recommit our lives to spiritual grow and the renewal of life through family and friends.

Kohlmann wins *SURFLANT* Sea SOY

By MC1(SW) Ardelle L. Purcell

Top Gator’s CTM1(SW/AW/SS) Marcus J. Kohlmann, was announced as the Commander, Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (SURFLANT), Sea Sailor of the Year on March 19.

Kohlmann, a nine-year Navy veteran will now represent the USS NASSAU, Commander, Amphibious Group TWO (COMPHIBGRU 2) and SURFLANT at the Fleet Forces Sailors of the Year competition.

“I was honored just to have been selected as NASSAU’s Sailor of the Year, especially with all of the outstanding Sailors that also went up,” said Kohlmann.

“It was one of the proudest moments of my naval Career. I know that this selection means that I have been surrounded by positive influences both up and down my chain of command allowing me to succeed. Something like this is never expected, but it is great to know that the job you’re doing is both respected and appreciated,” he said.

Kohlmann, the Ship’s Signals Ex-

ploitation Spaces Leading Petty Officer and Joint Intelligence Center Systems Maintenance Supervisor, held challenging collateral duties as the Assistant Command Fitness Leader, First Class Association President, Fitness Enhancement Program Coordinator, and 3M Work Center Supervisor. He says his selection as Sailor of the Year has been fulfilling yet he remains modest.

“I could not say why specifically I was selected as Sailor of the Year. You never work for something like this, but you just try to do your job to the best of your ability,” said Kohlmann.

“There were a lot of extremely professional and talented Sailors who also went up whom I respect very much. To have been chosen from among them was definitely a humbling experience. I am very proud to represent NASSAU, COMPHIBGRU 2 and SURFLANT at the Sailor of the Year competition. It’s a chance to reflect positively on NASSAU and all of its Sailors.

With career goals to become a Chief Petty Officer and ultimately get selected within the Limited Duty Officer community, to someday take command

of a Navy Information Operations Command, no task seems to be too hard for Kohlmann.

“The best way that I could describe my Navy career up to this point is ‘challenging.’ I have tried to take the orders that would allow me to both learn and grow professionally. I am proud of what I have accomplished so far and I look forward to a challenging future,” he said.

As a leader and mentor, Kohlmann lets junior Sailors know his key to success.

“The best advice I have ever received, and will continue to pass along is, ‘Any job worth doing, is worth doing right.’ It sounds simple, but that’s why it works,” said Kohlmann.

“This goes along with everything from the smallest task to the largest evolution. If you have the choice of doing things the easy way or doing things the right way; the right way should always prevail. I also realize that any situation you encounter in the Navy can be used as a learning experience, and

Please See “Kohlmann” Page 12.

Top Gator Receives “Green H” Award

By MC3 Amanda Clayton

USS NASSAU recently received the 2006 Force Commander Annual Wellness Award. The award recognizes a commands excellence in health promotion. Along with the award, NASSAU is approved to paint the green “H” on the Island of the ship. The award is based on the calendar year Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

“The award enhances battle readiness by promoting the health, fitness, and mental well-being of active duty Sailors,” said Senior Medical Officer, CAPT David Lasseter. It encourages participation in health promotion activities, and provides formal recognition to units that have excelled in establishing and promoting a command conducive to health promotion,” said Lasseter.

NASSAU’s Medical department submitted information from its command needs assessment and Periodic Health Assessment, goals and evaluation of the health programs, physical readiness that included data from both Physical Fitness Assessments (PFA) for 2006 and data from its Fitness Enhancement Program results of the PFA. NASSAU also provided data from its health promotion training, tobacco cessation classes and dental readiness program.

“We worked hard verifying records of all patients onboard to ensure the information was accurate,” said NASSAU’s Dental Officer CAPT Michael Lewis.



USN Photo by MC2 Andrew King.

NASSAU’s Dental Officer, CAPT Michael Lewis (center) works on a patient with the assistance of HM Nancy Mclin (left) and HM Lawrence Amos.



USN Photo by MC2 Andrew King.

NASSAU’s HM3 Michael Mitchell stitches a head laceration on March 15.

Data for individual medical readiness and best practices were also collected for the application form.

“Best practices could be anything we designed and implemented for our health promotion program. One example is our “Cruise to your Goal” weight management program that we offered during the 2005-2006 deployment,” said Lasseter.

The entire Top Gator crew helped win the prestigious green “H” by completing the Health Risk Assessment.

“It was a department-wide evolution with the combined synergy of many small programs and efforts,” said HM1(SW/AW) Benjamin Russick.

Teamwork was the determining factor for the end results.

“Collectively, everyone onboard were key players in ensuring different processes were in place to effectively collect data required to maximize our points,” said HMCM (SW/FMF) Keith Staples. “Once everyone understands how each part they play affects our readiness as a team and how important each and every Sailor is, we realize we can’t do one job without the other person.



USN Photo by MC2 Andrew King.

BM2(SW) Chuck Brooks teaches USS NASSAU's (LHA 4) duty section Security Alert Team (SAT) members how to properly handcuff an individual in preparation for NASSAU's upcoming Unit Level Training Readiness Assessment-Sustainment (ULTRA S) inspection. ULTRA S will provide an assessment of NASSAU's training and overall readiness.

Sailors arm up in preparation for “ULTRA S”

Story by MC2 Andrew King

Get on the ground, hands out, palms up. Turn your head away from the sound of my voice, cross your feet. Do it, do it now!

These are the sounds that can be heard resonating from the well decks of USS NASSAU, as the Top Gator's Security team trains the crew weekly for security drills that they must complete for the Unit Level Training Readiness Assessment-Sustainment (ULTRA S) inspection, April 25 - 27.

Tight schedules and limited time in port has made training especially difficult for members of the Security Alert Team (SAT), Basic Alert Force (BAF), and deck watches that will be tested by members of Afloat Training Group (ATG), on their knowledge as well as application of Pre-Planned Response (PPR) as set forth by NASSAU's instructions.

“We drill them on handcuffing procedures, tactical movement, response times, and general knowledge such as

weapons ranges, general orders and the definition of deadly force,” said MA2(SW) Kristopher Griffin.

In preparation for ULTRA S testing, the Force Protection Training Team (FPTT) members set up different scenario stations to train the crew on hand cuffing, searching for bombs, both in rooms and vehicles, combat movement throughout the ship, hostage situations and quarterdeck watches.

The training team also walks crewmember through each station slowly to make sure everyone has a thorough understanding of what will be expected during real life scenarios and for the inspection.

“We are training the SAT and BAF teams on how to properly hand cuff and search an individual for ULTRAS,” said NASSAU's BM2 (SW) Chuck Brooks, a former ATG inspector.

Administration paperwork will also be checked to ensure personnel are qualified for the watches they are standing.

Weapons qualifications and in-

structor certifications must also be up to date.

“Not only do we need to keep up on academics but also qualify on weapons as well,” said MA2(SW/AW) Maria Holmes, a small arms instructor.

NASSAU's Security Department must also ensure that the proper gear is on hand and available for response teams should the situation arise. The Allowance Equipage List (AEL) is verified to what is onboard and discrepancies are corrected to reflect what is on the list.

“We need to get the AEL and verify all the gun belts and flash lights that we have onboard, then compare it,” said Griffin.

The FPTT has given crew members a good start preparing for ULTRA S. With continued training crewmembers of the SAT, BAF and deckwatch teams will hone their skills to successfully pass Ultra S. These drills will allow ATG to determine how well NASSAU Sailors are prepared in the event of a force protection situation.



Top Gator's Commanding Officer, CAPT John Roberti, is presented with a model of the Joint Strike Fighter F-35B, jet from Kenneth G. Gigliotti of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Corporation.

Lockheed Martin Engineers Visit Top Gator

By MC2(AW) Susan Milton

More than 10 Lockheed Martin Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)-35 design engineers came onboard NASSAU while underway on March 9, to observe Vertical Short Take Off and Landings (VSTOL) by AV-8B Harrier jet operations.

Lockheed Martin engineers used this visit to familiarize the designers of the JSF-35 VSTOL aircraft, with some of the operational and environmental challenges of shipboard life.

"These engineers were embarked onboard NASSAU to understand the impacts and challenges this aircraft will face operating in the shipboard maritime environment. They have never been on a ship of this type to feel the power and thrust of a Harrier jet at take off and landing," said NASSAU's Air Boss, CDR Leonard Loughran.

Highlights of their visit included touring Primary Flight Control, the hangar bay, the flight deck during flight quarters and speaking with Sailors and Marines who carry out the everyday

duties of maintenance on aircraft.

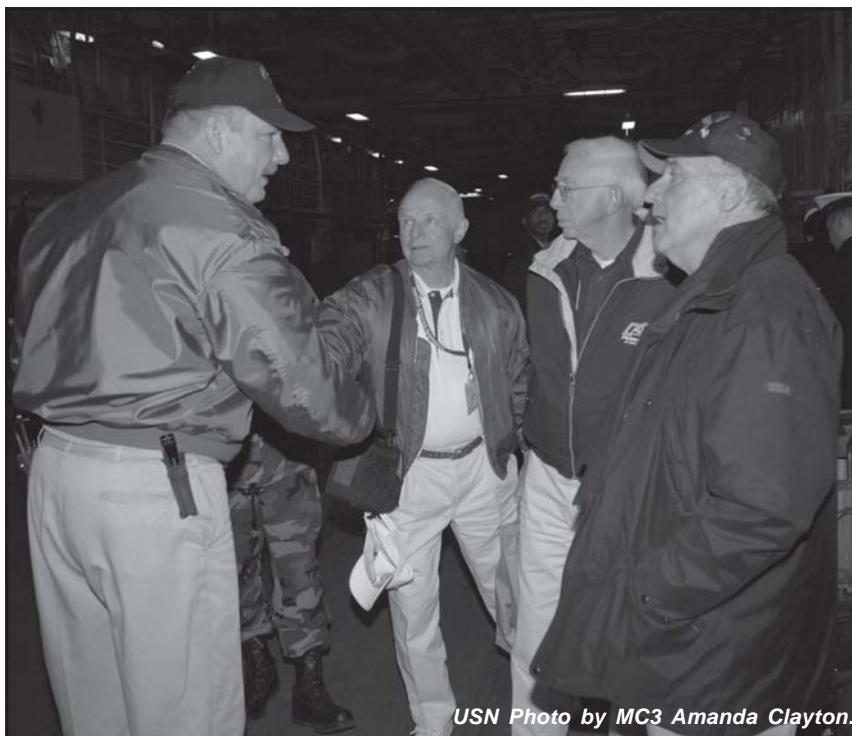
Kenneth G. Gigliotti, former U.S. Navy Tomcat pilot commented, "The insights we gather from these embark opportunities have value that is hard to pin a price tag on. I never cease to be amazed at how smart and dedicated our young Marines and Sailors really are. No doubt we all returned with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment."

In addition to taking a tour of the ship, Mr. Gigliotti and the design engineers later made their way to Officer's Country for a presentation in the wardroom.

NASSAU's Commanding Officer, CAPT John Roberti, was presented with a model of the JFS-35 VSTOL jet and a first flight coin.

"It was a very nice gift and a good memento of their visit," said CAPT Roberti. "I hope we learned as much from them as they learned from us."





USN Photo by MC3 Amanda Clayton.

Richmond Navy League Members Underway with NASSAU

Top Gator's Command Master Chief, Rick Makowski, welcomes Richmond Council Navy League members - Ed Gibbons, Tom Hassell, and Dave Vachet onboard for USS NASSAU's five day underway.

By MC3 Amanda Clayton

With the recent inspections and drills USS NASSAU's Sailors have faced, it's not a surprise to see a variety of Afloat Training Group members walking around, but lately Sailors have noticed a few new faces.

Mr. Tom Hassell, the Senior Vice President of the Richmond Council Navy League, Mr. Ed Gibbons, former President, and Mr. Dave Vachet, the Liaison and Vice President of Youth Services, decided to get underway with NASSAU from March 19 to March 23, to experience the life of a Top Gator Sailor out to sea.

"I'm impressed on how intelligent the Sailors are onboard, they seem interested in doing a good job. Everyone has been so polite in showing us around the ship," said Hassell, and Mr. Vachet couldn't agree more.

"We sat down at chow today with some of the Sailors and they were so nice, they actually invited us to tour their work spaces."

The Richmond Council Navy

League adopted USS NASSAU on Sept. 21, 2006. Their main goal is to help military personnel and their families in the time of need and to improve the quality of life for active military members and their families.

With approximately 700 men and women who show their support to the Maritime forces of the United States, according to their website, one of their objectives is, "To serve as a means of educating and informing the American people with regard to the role of Sea Power in the nuclear age and the problems involved in maintaining strong defenses in that age.

"To improve the understanding and appreciation of those who wear the uniforms of our Armed Forces and to better the conditions under which they live and serve."

With help from the Navy League's members, money is raised to sponsor a group of ships adopted by the League.

"Everything we collect we give away. We have sponsors, we contact companies, and we have a Siegel Center concession and popcorn stand during the Virginia Commonwealth Univer-

sity basketball games," said Hassell. "When we started talking with Command Master Chief Rick Makowski, knowing that he has a position of understanding what benefits the crew, he triggered the idea to donate televisions."

With the addition of two new 42-inch plasma televisions donated to junior Sailors' male and female living spaces, they also donated \$300 for NASSAU's surge in support of Phoenix Express 2007.

The money will support a program called Super Top Gator of the Day, which will recognize NASSAU Sailors each day and award them five dollars to be used at the ship store.

"The donations from the Navy League are a nice reminder that there are others back home who support us," said AM2 (AW) Glynn Koepke.

"The gentlemen had a genuine interest in our efforts and capabilities. We got along great and enjoyed sharing stories with one another. It was a pleasure to have the gentlemen from the Navy League onboard and we look forward to their next visit."

Record Setting EOC on NASSAU

By MCSN Steven Scott Smith

Since USS NASSAU's departure from the shipyards, certifications have been a constant priority. In efforts to achieve the highest markings possible during those certifications, constant drills and simulated scenarios that were performed have finally paid off.

For the past couple of months, NASSAU prepared for the Engineering Operational Certification (EOC) given by Afloat Training Group on March 29. EOC is a certification that validates the ship's ability to maintain measurable and sustainable levels of proficiency in all engineering areas.

The certification exercise took place at sea during NASSAU's transit across the Atlantic Ocean to Commander, Sixth Fleet Area of Responsibility in support of Exercise Phoenix Express 2007. ATG evaluated, monitored and graded the entire process. The end result was the Top Gator attaining the highest marks this year.

"The most difficult part was the limited amount of time for training, and limited number of watch standers, which is a result from turnover during our yard period," said MMC(SW) Charles McEachin. "What it took most ships three to five months to prepare for, we did in six weeks."

According to NASSAU's Auxiliary Officer, LCDR Mark Fournier, having an experienced engineering crew was a huge benefit.

"The evolutions all went really smooth, but what it came down to were the watch standers on stations," he said. "They kept everything up to par, that's why we were able to achieve such high marks."

"In the beginning it felt as if we were never going to be able to complete a single drill set due to material or equipment issues. However, during EOC, it went off without a hitch. The watch team remained focused and executed each drill set as if the assessors were not even standing there," added ENC(SW/AW) Dennis Donato.

In a message sent to the ship from RADM Garry E. Hall, Commander, Expeditionary Group TWO, RADM Hall recognizes the efforts and dedication of NASSAU Sailors.

"Bravo Zulu for a job well done on successfully completing your EOC with an overall numerical grade of 91.3 percent. In ATG language this is a grade of outstanding," said RADM Hall. "You showed a lot of pride. You have demonstrated leadership, excellence and exceptional professionalism. Your intense focus, hard work and dedication, resulted in an accomplishment few have achieved. Again, job well done to the officers and superb crew of NASSAU!"

The overall outcome of EOC is the result of unit cohesion displayed by Top Gator Sailors.

"Despite all the frustrations that we encountered during the long working hours leading up to EOC, we were able to come together as a team and that's what made EOC such a success," said EM3 Daniel Columbo.

MESA VERDE Sailors Sail with NASSAU

By MC2 Andrew King

Seventy-one Sailors from MESA VERDE (LPD 19), a pre-commissioned Amphibious Transport Dock (LPD) ship of the SAN ANTONIO class, got under way with USS NASSAU March 28, for a six week surge in support of Exercise Phoenix Express 2007.

The MESA VERDE is the third of the SAN ANTONIO class LPD to be built and will replace older LPDs. The new class is designed to be a versatile platform for a verity of mission that involves putting Marines on the beach. The ship is designed with cutting edge self-defense capabilities and reduced radar cross section signature to make it a highly reliable and survivable vessel. The ship is also designed to be easily upgraded to support new technologies

throughout its' projected 40 years of service.

The Sailors from MESA VERDE joined NASSAU to become familiar with underway routines and qualifications.

Sailors from 12 different rates will each received training in their respective fields and be able to qualify on many watch stations and procedures that can be taken back to the MESA VERDE when it receives her commission and sets sail for the first time.

"Since we are precom we rely on the fleet to get our people qualified in damage control and other watch stations," said SKCS William Bunker. "SURFLANT tells us about these training opportunities."

A majority of the 71 Sailors are between the ranks of E-1 and E-4. For many, this is the first time getting un-

derway on a ship. They must qualify in there respective areas of work to ensure that the MESA VERDE has a fully qualified crew upon commissioning.

"This is the first time we brought Seaman with us," said BM1(SW) Teddy Garmon. We must make sure everyone is qualified when the ship is commissioned."

"I'm able to get my Master Helmsman qualification and work on my ESWS pin too," added BM2 Summer Levert.

Since many of the embarked MESA VERDE Sailors are experiencing being at sea for the first time, they are gaining valuable experience that will help prepare them for future operations on the Navy's newest LPD. For the senior Sailors, this opportunity will refresh their ship board procedures, enabling them to effectively lead their junior Sailors.

Canadian Dentists Deploy With NASSAU



USN Photos by MC2(AW) Susan Milton.

Canadian Army Dentists, CAPT Raymond Liew (right) and SGT Tod Sinclair, of the Canadian Forces Dental Services volunteered to train with USS NASSAU's Medical Department, while the ship conducted a six week surge to the Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet Area of Responsibility.

By MC2(AW) Susan Milton

NASSAU Sailors and Marines welcomed a pair of Canadian Army Dentists from the Canadian Forces Dental Services when the ship left her homeport of Norfolk, VA., for Exercise Phoenix Express 2007 on March 28.

CAPT Raymond Liew, the equivalent of a Navy Lieutenant and Sergeant Tod Sinclair, equivalent to a first class petty officer, arrived onboard to train with NASSAU's Medical department.

Liew, originally stationed at Georgetown, New Brunswick Providence and Sinclair, stationed at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan are volunteers for NASSAU's six week surge to the Com-

mander, U.S. Sixth Fleet Area of Responsibility.

"A message came out for tasking on NASSAU, and we put in requests and were picked to go," said Sinclair, "We weren't informed on what we were going to be doing, but we both wanted to try something different.

"I am impressed by all the new things I am seeing and learning. This is our first time on a ship and it is amazing how integrated U.S. Sailors are. Everyone has been so helpful and courteous," said Liew.

Training and working alongside Top Gator's Hospital Corpsman, Liew and Sinclair see patients on a regular basis.

"We have 30 percent more appoint-

ments available now, which benefits the crew greatly. We are all working just fine together, and they have blended in well with us and they are familiar with our equipment," said CAPT Micheal Lewis, NASSAU's Dental Officer.

The Canadian Forces Dental Services Headquarters are based out of Ottawa, Canada. This is the first time in NASSAU history that the Canadian Forces Dental Services have been onboard, however, Canadian dentists and hygienists volunteer to work all over the world, including as Individual Augmentees in Iraq.

Different countries are picked each time to train with the U.S. Navy, and this just one way Canada and the U.S., continue their strong ties.

MWR Tours in Rota, Spain

Tuesday, April 10

Gibraltar Rock Tour and Dolphin Cruise

Venture to Gibraltar and experience a taste of Britain. Take a boat ride around the rock and see the dolphins and whales that populate the straits of Gibraltar. You will have free time for shipping or lunch followed by a guided two-hour tour of the rock. The tour includes visits to the siege tunnels, St. Michael's cave, the Barbary apes and the Moorish tower. A valid passport is required.

Depart: 7 a.m. (muster at 6:40 a.m.)

Return: 7 p.m.

Cost: \$35 includes transportation.

Cadiz

Cadiz is the oldest continuously inhabited city in Europe. Begin with a panoramic tour of the city and a guided visit to the main cathedral. You will then walk through the old town to the tower that houses the Camera Obscura, which is a device similar to a periscope that projects moving images onto a dish shaped screen. Shopping and lunch afterwards.

Depart: 9 a.m. (muster at 8:40 a.m.)

Return: 4 p.m.

Cost: \$25 includes transportation and guided tour.

Wednesday, April 11

Ubrique Leather Shopping Trip

Enjoy the beautiful mountain scenery of Sierra de La Grazelema on the way to the town of Ubrique. This trip makes a stop at a leather factory, where you will see many beautiful leather products being crafted. Spend time wandering through leather boutiques and discovering why Ubrique is known for their handcrafted leather items.

Depart: 8 a.m. (muster at 7:40 a.m.)

Return: 5 p.m.

Cost: \$15 includes transportation and leather factory tour.

Thursday, April 12

Sevilla

Spend the day in the capital of Andalucia. Great shopping, sightseeing and restaurants to enjoy.

Depart: 8 a.m. (muster at 7:40 a.m.)

Return: 6 p.m.

Cost: \$15 includes transportation

Saturday, April 14

Gibraltar Rock Tour and Dolphin Cruise

Venture to Gibraltar and experience a taste of Britain. Take a

boat ride around the rock and see the dolphins and whales that populate the straits of Gibraltar. You will have free time for shipping or lunch followed by a guided two-hour tour of the rock. The tour includes visits to the siege tunnels, St. Michael's cave, the Barbary apes and the Moorish tower. A valid passport is required.

Depart: 7 a.m. (muster at 6:40 a.m.)

Return: 7 p.m.

Cost: \$35 includes transportation.

Biking Via Verde

One of the most popular cycling trails in the Sierra. It goes along an old train rail idea that never was built up! Enjoy during almost six hours on your bike after a light breakfast in Algodonales.

Depart: 8 a.m.

Return: 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$35 includes transportation, insurances, bikes, follow up car and professional guides.

Bodega/Flamenco

Begin with a tour of one of Jerez's most famous bodegas and sample their sherry wine. Next is dinner at a popular local restaurant with an authentic flamenco show. Bring Euros if you wish to purchase any wine or gifts at the bodega.

Depart: 6:30 p.m. (muster at 6 p.m.)

Return: Midnight

Cost: \$35 includes transportation, guided bodega tour, sherry wine tasting, dinner, drinks and flamenco show.

Sunday, April 15

Deep Sea Fishing

Spend the day fishing and cruising with professional fisherman on a private charter. Some refreshments will be offered.

Depart: 8 a.m.

Return: 6 p.m.

Cost: \$130 includes transportation, private charter, insurance, baits, fishing licenses, and professional captain-guide.

Canyon Descending

The activity starts with a little trekking to "La Hermita", a big cave in continuous building, with lots of stalactites & stalagmites. Then the trip will be more active: rappelling, natural slides and hang glides, through the river-bed to a crystal water lake where begins the aquatic ride of the "Garganta Verde" Canyon. The trip includes transportation, insurance, a light breakfast, all the equipment and professional guides. No alcoholic drinks are allowed during the complete trip.

Depart: 8 a.m.

Return: 7 p.m.

Cost: \$35

Gator In The Spotlight

ASAN Christopher Melendrez

Navy experience: 3 years
Time onboard: 2 years
Hometown: Palm Springs, Calif.

Why did you decide to enlist in the Navy?

I actually did it for the money for college, and because I wanted to experience different cultures. My uncle was in the Army and my brother is still in the Army. I am the first one in my family to join the Navy.

What was the biggest surprise for you in boot camp?

It felt like I was in a movie the way I got yelled at and treated. My brother really prepared me mentally for it. He told me all about what happens and what to expect. It was something I was definitely ready for.

What do you like most about



ASAN Christopher Melendrez received a ship's coin from USS SAIPAN's Commanding Officer, CAPT Richard D. Fitzpatrick after a class Charlie fire was called away on the pier on Jan 31. He expertly operated a 4K RT forklift and removed highly explosive pressurized oxygen bottles away from the fire to prevent damage.

being an Aviation Support Equipment Technician?

I like that we are all like a family. We motivate and help each other out. We are close knit. I like that I am able to work on Detroit diesel engines and get my hands dirty.

Most memorable moment since you joined the Navy?

It would definitely have to be the day the NASSAU pulled into the Bahamas. I felt proud to be in the Navy. People on the cruise ships were cheering and clapping. It made me feel that I had made the right decision to enter the military.

What do you do in your spare time?

I like to hang out with friends, but I'm not really into the clubs. I go

to Bar-B-Q's in the local parks and at my friend's houses.

What would motivate you to get your Air Warfare pin?

It's just a matter of time. I am planning to get my aviation warfare pin. I am currently working to on my qualifications. It would be nice if having it got me promoted.

Who is your role model and why?

I would have to say my mother. No matter what I do, she is always there to support me and she helps prepare me mentally for different situations that I may be going through. She also helps me see things from different view points, and that helps me stay out of trouble by not following the crowd.

Bravo Zulu

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

SK1 Rickey Kemp
BM2 Ronald Holloway
AO3 James Phelps
IT3 Keith Crouch
AO3 Jaden Sivils
MM3 Jeffrey Bealmeal
EN3 John Lynch
ABAN Amanda Orefice
AZAN Taylor Coughlin

Good Conduct Medals

GM2 Kyle Andreano
BM2 Danny Baker
OS2 Terrance Belton
MM2 Jeremiah Ruley
IT3 Michael Taylor
ABH3 Mark Higginbottom
MM3 Jeremy Boersma
AO3 James Phelps
MM3 Westly Zatocilnizay
MM3 Robert Beard
AN Armando Garcia

QMSN Andrew Milanoski
ADA N Hattori Chandler
HN Nancy McLin
AN Kevin Santons
AOAN Baldemero

Letter Of Commendation

ITSN Troy Johnson
SN Christopher Johnson



Frocking Advancement

DC3 Randolph Gaul



Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialists

AS3 Marlon Bevans
QM1 Jennifer Harrison
ABH2 Jose Vega
MA2 Maria Holmes



Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists

PS2 Lester Gomes
CS2 T.M. Stone

Super Top Gator of the Day

March 28 - SKSN R. Garber (Supply)
March 28 - CSSN Z. Salavatov (Supply)
March 29 - ITSN Troy D. Johnson (C5I)
March 30 - DC3 Samuel Moore (ENG)
March 30 - HTFN Ryan Visage (ENG)
March 31 - ABHAN Ryan Oney (AIR)
March 31 - AN Franklyn Casiano (AIR)

"Deployment" From Page 2.

six months before the ship will deploy again to any other geographic command. Think of dwell time as your time at home.

Prior to the Navy's new focus, the ship that had most recently returned from a deployment was considered the ready ship, ready to deploy at a moment's notice as it was the one geared up and set to go. Per the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), this is no longer the case.

In a recent message (NAVADM 051/07), the CNO, ADM Mike Mullen, wrote that "we are deliberately taking action to strike the right balance be-

tween our need to provide rotational forward forces, our obligation to prepare forces for major contingencies and crisis, and our time at home."

His plan is to maximize our ability to deploy, provide flexibility to our COCOMs, align our terminology with the other services, and account for ALL of YOUR deployed time. Now, any time spent on deployment will count as deployed time, even if it's for one day only. Before the new plan, the deployment clock did not begin until 56 days into the deployment.

Although this is a new Navy policy, not all units will be affected by the changes. Because of unique missions or operating cycles, fleet ballistic

missile submarines, aviation training and fleet replacement squadrons, military assigned to MSC ships, permanently forward-deployed units, deployed units operating with rotating crews, naval mobile construction battalions and cryptological direct support personnel are not included.

Bottom line here, shipmates, is we are a nation at war. We have taken the oath to support and defend our nation as part of the country's warfighting, seagoing service. You and your families' contributions and sacrifices are valued by the leadership and the American public. This new focus will help us take care of you, the lifeblood and heart of the Navy.

"Kohlmann" From Page 3.

that sometimes means that the bad situation is sometimes your best learning tool. Keep your mind open to change and effectively communicate with your chain of command."

Kohlmann will represent the

NASSAU, COMPHIBGRU 2 and SURFLANT at the Fleet Forces Command level, which is scheduled to take place in April, where he will compete with other type command Sailors of the Year.

The Sailors selected to be the overall Fleet Forces Command Sea and

Shore Sailors of the Year, will attend a meritorious promotion ceremony hosted by the Chief of Naval Operations.

According to Navy Operational Instruction 1700.10K, ADM Elmo Zumwalt initiated the Sailor of the Year program in 1972 to recognize outstanding Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Sailors.